

Complete texts

Format:

Cherokee

Word-for-word translation

Literary translation

2. 1938 — Love letter no. 1

Beloved, don't leave me alone/forget me. Beloved, this is what I am thinking: send me letters for me to read your thinking. Could you send my dresses I will be looking for? Send them next week. Just don't forget I am alive [though clearly I will die]. I want you and I to live together and make our own decisions.

Gvgeyui + hesdi + tsisginelvhi

Beloved + don't + leave·me·alone/forget me

Beloved, don't leave me alone/forget me.

Gvgeyui + hia + tsigelia + goweli + tinvnvi + agigoliyedi + nelisgvi

Beloved + this + I·am·thinking + paper + send·me + for·me·to·read + thinking

Beloved, this is what I am thinking: send me letters for me to read your thinking.

Gvgeyui + yidodasginvneli + diquasano + detsigadenohesdiquu + soi + walenvhvi + dodisginvnelvi

Beloved + could·you·send·them·to·me + my·dresses + I·will·just·be·looking·for·them + next + when·it's·beginning·[week] + send·them·to·me

Could you send my dresses I will be looking for? Send them next week.

hesdigwu + tsitsvkewisi + ayv + gevi + gvni + tsiyousvi

just·don't + forget·it + I + am·living + my·life/clearly + I·have/will·died

Just don't forget I am alive [though clearly I will die].

Gvgeyui + aquaduli + ginvsa + ginaneladisdii + ginvsa + ginadanvtadi

Beloved + I·want + you·and·I·alone + for·us·to·live·in·our·place·of·cohabitation + you·and·I·alone + for·us·to·think/decide

I want you and I to live together and make our own decisions.

4. 1939 — Love letter no. 2

I am happy I just saw you. You must get me my shoes, size six. Also my socks. I will be looking for them on Monday. I love you beyond limits. I am happy I just saw you.

Galieligi + tsigvgowata

I·am·happy + I·just·saw·you

I am happy I just saw you.

hiano + diqualasuwa + ka + sudali + digoweli + ase + desginvelvi

This + my·shoes + now six·[size] + it·is·written + must + you·get·them·for·me

You must get me my shoes, size six.

diqualiyono + nasquu

my·socks + those·also

Also my socks.

detsigatenohesdi + unadodaquonvhigwu

I'll·be·looking·for·them + just·on·Monday

I will be looking for them on Monday.

gvgeyui + utsasvsdiquo

I·love·you + beyond

I love you beyond limits.

Galieligi + tsigvgowata

I·am·happy + I·just·saw·you

I am happy I just saw you.

6. 1893 — Letter from Tahlequah

There is a sickness that happened to my friends all around here that makes one in a really bad way. But perhaps we are all headed that way. That sickness is climbing on me. [colloquial meaning “I’m getting sick”]

yvigvnadenv + digwalii + nulsdvnvi + ale + oyoitsv + nasgi + vtsvgi + tseha

wide-area + my-friends + it-happened + and + one-bad + that + one’s-sickness + that-lives

There is a sickness that happened to my friends all around here that makes one in a really bad way.

asedina + nigadi + widiti

but-perhaps + everyone + we-are-headed-that-way

But perhaps we are all headed that way.

ayv + gesvi + agilidoha + nasgi + vtsvgi

I + it-is + it’s-climbing-on-me + that + sickness

That sickness is climbing on me.

yvigvnadenv + digwalii + nulsdvnvi

wide-area + my-friends + it-happened

[It] happened to my friends all around here.

8. 1897 — Note from a judge

You should just forgive each other. Somewhere one can find it is possible that one can do that. Just accept each other. You two make this right. Perhaps someone comes to understand an expression like that when one has died. All that she wants is for you to forgive each other well and now the only thing that I want is for you two to make peace.

Disdadadolitsediquo

You·two·should·just·forgive·each·other

You should just forgive each other.

hilvhitlv + yvgayvwatv + nasgi + igvwadvditi + gesvi

somewhere + one·can·find·it + that + for·one·to·do·it + it·is

Somewhere one can find it is possible that one can do that.

Disda + nilvi[hna]siquo

just·accept·each·other

Just accept each other.

osdv + nisdvga

right + you·two·make·it

You two make this right.

Gilo + yigi + gvwatlisdi + nasgi + iyusdi + iyuwesdi + gvwagvti + udayohusedi

someone + can·be + for·one·to·understand + that + like + for·one·to·say + for·one·to·see + one·will·have·died

Perhaps someone comes to understand an expression like that when one has died.

Nigavquo + osdv + tsidadadolitseti + uduliha + ale + nasquo + ayv + gesv + nasgigwu + igai + agwaduliha + dohiquo + is[dv]ditiyi

All + well + forgive·each·other + she·wants + and + now + I + it·is + that·also + quantity + I·want + peace + for·you·two·to·make·it

All that she wants is for you to forgive each other well and now the only thing that I want is for you two to make peace.

10. 1897 — Letter to remember by

The ground shook. [1811 earthquake]

Stars fell. [1833 Leonid meteor shower]

Gold was discovered. [1828]

I wrote this to remember things that happened long ago.

The sun was hiding. [1831 solar eclipse]

Gadohi + ulitelanvi

Ground + shook

The ground shook.

noquisi + uninvgosv

Stars + fell

Stars fell.

adelv + dalonige + uniwadvhv

Money [gold] + yellow + was-found

Gold was discovered.

ayv + gowelvga + hia + an'dadisdo + etiyu + nvdagwadalenvdv

I + wrote + this + to-remember-with + long-ago + when-things-started

I wrote this to remember things that happened long ago.

Nvdo + adehaluge + nul(i)stanvi

Sun + was-hiding + it-happened

The sun was hiding.

12. 1902 — Note about a runaway

I was looking for her all day and night on Monday. And then after I had used up all day and night, I found her the next morning. “Come back now,” I told her. She is the guilty one.

Unadodaquonvhi

Monday

Monday

Unadodaquonvhi + udodaquadv + tsiyohvgi

Monday + all-day + I-was-looking-for-her

I was looking for her all day on Monday

unadodaquonvhi + udodaquadv

Monday + all-day

All day on Monday

nahiyui + unadodaquonvhi + udodaquadv + svnoyino

And-then + Monday + all-day + and-night

All day Monday and all night.

Udodaquadv + tsiyohvgi + udodaquadv + svnoyino

All-day + I-was-looking-for-her + all-day + and-night

I was looking for her all day and night on Monday

ulitsv + daquatvno + taline + iga + sunale + tsiwatvhvgi

When-it-came + I-had-used-them + second + day + morning + I-found-her

And then after I had used up all day and night, I found her the next morning.

Tsiwatvhvgi

I-found-her

I found her.

dihatsvdina + agwadvnvgi + na(s)gino

Be-coming-back + I-said-to-her + now

“Come back now,” I told her.

Tsiyohvgi. . . + tsiwatvhvgi

I-was-looking-for-her . . . + I-found-her . . .

I was looking for her . . . I found her . . .

iyuwanisanvhi + saquo + gesvi

S/he-is-to-blame + one + is

She is the guilty one.

14. 1951 — Letter to My Mother

. . . Also, it rained here, surprisingly, but throughout this day, it was fair and warm. And truly, the day also passed by so long [slowly]. The month of April is not coming quickly enough. I am in such a hurry if there was anything I could do [about it]. But that's the way it goes.

nasquv + usquanigodi + gohi + dagana + asehno + kohi + iga + udodaquv

Also + surprisingly + a-while-ago + it-rained + but + this + day + all-day

. . . Also, it rained here, surprisingly, but throughout this day,

osda + ale + uganawiquv + gesv

Fair + and + warm + it-was

It was fair and warm.

udohiyuquvdi + nasquv + ko'ilaquv + aliyalisv + udodaququv

Truly + also + as-it-is-coming-to-pass + it's-passing-by + the-whole-day

And truly, the day also passed by so long [slowly].

nulaquv + nigesvna + kuwohni + ugalv'isdihi + utsatiyehno

hurry + without + April + to-make-an-appearance + much

The month of April is not coming quickly enough.

agvnvga + gohusdi + gvdvnhdi + yigi

I'm-in-a-hurry + anything + for-me-to-do + if

I am in such a hurry if there was anything I could do [about it].

asehno + nasgiquv + nigalisdiha

but + that + (is what) happens

But that's the way it goes.

nasquv + usquanigodi + gohi + dagana . . .

Also + surprisingly + a-while-ago + it-rained

. . . Also, it rained here, surprisingly . . .

osda + uganawiquv

Fair (weather), + warm . . .

Fair weather, warm . . .

16. 1938 — Love letter no. 3

Truly, send me my shoes, size six and a half. Also my silk socks. I will be looking for them Saturday. I love you.

Udohiyu + desginvnelvi

Truly + send·them·to·me

Truly send them to me . . .

Udohiyu + diqualasuwa + sudali + ayeli + digoweli

Truly + my·shoes + six + half + written

Truly, send me my shoes, size six and a half.

Udohiyu + diliyono + disiligi

Truly + also·socks + silk

Also my silk socks.

unadodawidenagwu + detsigadenohesdi

Saturday + I·will·be·looking·for·them

I will be looking for them Saturday.

Gvgeyui

I·love·you

I love you

18. 1873 — Letter from Asheville

This is for me to write: I am here in Asheville. I have been here for a long time.

There is nothing to be done.

(This is for me to write)

Ka + aquowelodi + nvgalisda

This + for-me-to-write + it-happened

This is for me to write:

hani + atokiyasdiyi + gedoha

Here + Asheville + I-am-here

I am here in Asheville.

Asequoquo

... because ...

... because ...

nigohigi + geda + hani + tsa + gohusdi + digalvwisdanediigi

A-long-time + I-am + here + not-something + for-me-to-work

I have been here for a long time. There is nothing to be done.

Ka + aquowelodi + nvgalisda

This + for-me-to-write + it-happened

This is for me to write.